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EDITORIAL NOTES

The Chicago election of last spring, and the consequent changes in the Board of Education served to bring out two different ideals of political and educational policy. Leaving out of account those on each side who were simply playing the political or educational game for selfish or party or class interests, the sincere and public-spirited supporters of each side were influenced by one of two theories. The one party demanded administrative efficiency as the foremost aim; the other was more directly concerned with discovering and meeting social needs. It is true that the more intelligent advocates of administrative efficiency would say that this is only a means to the education of children, and that the more intelligent "social reformers" would regard efficiency as a necessary means of carrying out their programme of meeting needs; but the emphasis of the respective parties falls on a different point in the process, and is likely to work differently in practice.

*TWO TYPES
OF EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION*

The standpoint of administrative efficiency is likely to assume the end of education or politics as fixed, just as it is in business. The aim in business is not open to consideration; it continues the same. Only its methods change. Reform in methods implies economy of time and money, elimination of waste, quick adjustment to the market, harmonious work of all departments. These are usually secured by centralization of power, and thoroughgoing direction of details. Applied to education, this theory usually assumes the end of education to be to prepare children to succeed in life. It insists on the "essential," and is apt to look on everything not needed in making or selling goods as "fads." It is apt to believe, not only that progress usually starts "at the top," but that sufficient authority and efficiency at this point is all that is necessary to drive the whole educational machinery rapidly and harmoniously. The tendency undoubtedly is to view the whole process as a mechanism.

*ADMINISTRATIVE
EFFICIENCY*

The aim of the "social reformers" is determined largely by contact with the other end of the system—the children or their parents. They may not be sure as to what are the right methods, just because they are not content to take the end of education as satisfactorily fixed at present. They may discuss, and possibly flounder in their efforts to find out what needs to be done, but social or educational advance does not usually come until there is some dissatisfaction, some criticism of existing methods. Progress and harmony do not usually go together. From this point of view waste in children is worse than waste in money. Furthermore, the center of gravity of the system is likely to be differently located by the two theories. Administrative efficiency naturally places this center in

*SOCIAL
REFORMERS*

the appointing power. If that is intelligent and has a free hand, good teachers can be appointed, bad ones dismissed; what more is needed? The other view places the center in the teaching body. It feels the force of the fact—even if it reads like a truism—that the teaching must be done by the teachers. It sees that the great bulk of the teachers must begin as novices and be made good or bad teachers largely by the influence of the teaching body itself. It realizes that education, as was pointed out in the February issue by *The School Review*, is finally a work of personal relation, not of educational machinery, and therefore is democratic. Administrative efficiency is likely to adjust the size of the school-rooms to the income. Social reform is likely to adjust the size of the room to the children. The old Board of Education was charged by its critics with considering the interest of the teachers. There is no doubt that most of the Board, at least, were simply convinced that where there is disaffection, discouragement, and a sense of unfair discrimination on the part of teachers, the children are likely to suffer. Nor, so long as human nature remains what it is, will the difficulty be met by the easy solution of the administrative reformers, viz.: let the teachers teach and ask no questions; let them take what they can get and be quiet; least of all, let them ask whether other people are paying their taxes, or a fair rent for school property—such questions are the unpardonable sin in those who are only hired employees.

The development of school administration in this country, like that of university administration, has undoubtedly made a demand for executive efficiency. Reforms have come very largely from above. Any resistance to measures of genuine advance, any position that seems to squint toward low standards of professional breadth and progress will not be tolerated by the public. But the teaching must be done by the teachers. No reform or advance means anything permanent or will in the long run benefit the children unless the teachers themselves appreciate its value and undertake it. And teachers will not be enthusiastic unless they believe they are treated squarely. Mere “sitting on the lid” is not enough to secure loyalty. Further, while efficiency in administration, and in every part of it, is no doubt important, it is none the less certain that it is a means and not the end. The end is to meet the needs of the growing community, to give its children the best and largest life now, and prepare them for life and citizenship later. The persons who are in a situation to appreciate the needs—not of the successful, for these usually send their children to private schools—but of the common ranks, are as important members of the school board as those who have proved their ability to manage great enterprises successfully. A community which can combine both ideals in its school system is fortunate. The new school board of Chicago has men of known administrative ability. It remains to be seen whether they will consider their appointment a mandate to ignore all that is valuable in the other ideal, or whether they will use their ability to promote it.

THE PLACE
OF EACH